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**Ecclesiasticus.** Reference has been made in the STUDENT to the inaugural address of Professor Margoliouth in assuming the chair of Arabic in the University of Oxford. That address has given rise to not a little controversy. The subject of the paper was the Apocryphal book of Ecclesiasticus. The reputed author of that book is Ben Sira or the son of Sirach. The course and contents of Prof. Margoliouth's essay have been thus summarized.

There are three versions of the book extant,—one in Greek, one in Syriac, and one in Latin. But it is now generally held that the original language was none of these, but Hebrew. Besides the three versions, there occur quotations from the book in the Talmud, which may be directly from the original Hebrew. Some time ago Mr. Margoliouth, along with the late Dr. Edersheim, set himself to reconstruct the original text; whereupon he made the surprising discovery that the original Hebrew must have been in metre. This at once made the reconstruction easier, and placed the reconstructed text on a much firmer basis. He then perceived that the original must have been neither in ancient Hebrew, like Isaiah, nor in middle Hebrew, like Nehemiah, but in modern Hebrew, like the Talmud itself. It was at this point that Mr. Margoliouth found himself in conflict with the results of the Higher Criticism. Ben Sira wrote, admittedly, about 200 B. C. If *modern* Hebrew was the literary language so early as that, it becomes necessary, in order to allow time for the gradual formation of this modern Hebrew, to push back the more ancient language in which Ecclesiastes, for example, or Daniel, is written to a much earlier period than the Higher Criticism allows. It is at this point that the controversy has arisen. Criticisms have been made by Profs. Cheyne, Driver, and Neubauer to which Mr. Margoliouth has made a striking reply in the *Expositor*, completely using up the latter critic while the two former have been compelled to yield some points.